

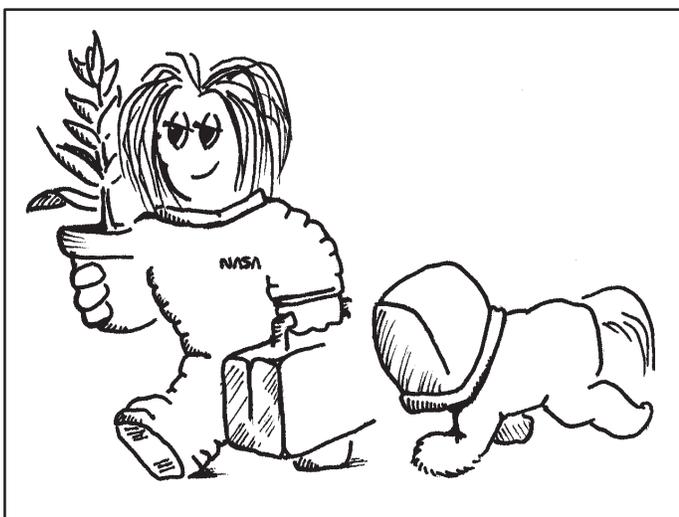


Science on the Web

Activity 3 The Space Shuttle

Jane had not told her parents much about her work on the Web. She didn't want to tell them she had been conversing with Uncle Josh because that would lead to other questions. The plans for the party were progressing nicely and so far the secret was safe. But she did tell them that she had been using the Web to find earthquake data and stuff like that.

Her mother liked to hear what Jane was doing in school, and she was curious about the Web. Boy, she'd be excited if she could write (or even *talk*) to her brother in San Francisco using e-mail or conferencing, thought Jane! Her mother was a "family" kind of person, and Jane looked forward to telling her about the Web tools after the party!

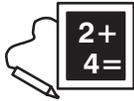


Jane's father was also interested in the Web. His small company didn't yet have a connection, but it had a small research contract with NASA for biological research (small for NASA, that is, but very important to Jane's dad). Lately, he had been pretty excited about the project that he had been doing: studying seed germination in a zero-gravity environment. An experiment designed by his company was scheduled to go up with the next NASA space shuttle mission, due to launch soon.

This morning at breakfast, Jane's dad asked her if she could use the Web to find out if the launch was on schedule, and if his company's experiment was included in the shuttle cabin's payload. Wow! People are sure expecting me to find out anything and everything these days, Jane thought. She almost blurted out that she didn't know how to get the information, but since her father seemed so interested and so confident that Jane could do it, she just smiled when he kissed her good-bye and said she'd try.

Still, she grumbled to herself on the way to school that everyone was thinking of her as some kind of expert even though she wasn't. Why me?! Her resentful feelings began to melt away when she got to NASA in a flash. Trouble was, the NASA site is *huge*.





Space Shuttle Missions

Go to the NASA home page.

<http://www.nasa.gov>

[Space Shuttle Launches](#) (in the sidebar)



Questions

- 3–1. How far in advance are shuttle flights scheduled?
- 3–2. What orbiter is due to launch next, and how many crew members will there be?
- 3–3. How many flights has the orbiter ever been on?
- 3–4. What delays (if any) have occurred in the launch schedule?

Return to the NASA Home page (**Back** should get you there)

Next, click on **Hot Topics** (below the pictures in the middle of the page)

Space Shuttle

Sneak Preview

Check the payload information for the next shuttle launch.



Questions

- 3–1. What experiments will be done in the cabin on the next space shuttle mission?
- 3–2. What delays (if any) have occurred in the launch schedule?

Connect to Spacelink

It's hard to get around in the NASA site without spending a lot of time (but you can learn a *lot*). Spend whatever time you want, but leave time to look at Spacelink: <http://spacelink.nasa.gov>

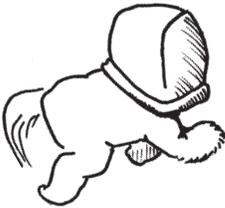
Be sure to go to **Hot Topics** on the Spacelink Home Page; you might want to even Bookmark it. To Bookmark a particular Web site, look for the Bookmark menu in your menu bar or below near the icons. Pull down and select **Add**. The browser will read your current URL and add it to your personal set of bookmarks.

Bookmarks

If you had to refer to the encyclopedia constantly, you might well decide to stick a bookmark in at the pages you refer to a lot.

You can do that with Web pages. When you get to a site that you think is valuable for future referral, select the bookmark option and “Add” a bookmark. Netscape will copy the URL into a personal bookmark file for you to use later. To return, use the same Bookmark option and select the URL from the list. Your browser will load that page immediately.

If you are accessing the Web at a school, bookmarks may not be allowed, may be collective (everybody who uses that computer can save bookmarks in a common file), or may be saved to your personal floppy diskette. You will have to ask how bookmarks are handled in your school.



Jane called her dad at the office and told him the shuttle information. He seemed to be delighted to have the latest news, and he was glad to see that his work was going to be a part of the space shuttle flight. He certainly had talked a lot—every night at dinner—about his experiment and what he might discover. By now, even Jane was getting interested in the idea of being weightless. She wondered what it might be like to live in an environment without gravity. She decided to use her computer to look up

library books about weightlessness. Making the connection to the library was easy: Mrs. Fine had used a computer class to look up some books at the Los Angeles Public Library, and the Web address was still on the board in the classroom.

**Library Systems**

There are hundreds of library systems connected to the Web, and many are linked together. If you can get into one system, you can often “hop” from system to system to find what you want.

One good source for the Western U.S. states is the Colorado Alliance Research Libraries Corporation home page. There are nearly 40 CARL System Libraries as of this writing.

<http://www.carl.org>

Our Library Partners Can you find your library there?
Los Angeles Public Library.

Search on **weightless** and **weightlessness** and sift through the list to find a non-fiction book that deals with the subject of weightlessness.



Intelligent Searches



An Infoseek Search on the word library yielded over 3.5 million “hits.”

A search on public library yielded over 5 million hits (all with library and all with public).

A search on “public library”(in quotes) yielded about 150,000 hits.

A search on library, followed by a secondary search within the first 3.5 million pages on public yielded 4,600 hits.

Get to know your search engines. They all work a little differently, and it makes a BIG difference.



Questions

- 3–3. List the title of a book at the Los Angeles Public Library that is about experiencing weightlessness on the space shuttle.
- 3–4. What information would you need to copy down in order to find the book when you go to the library?
- 3–5. Find a story by Isaac Asimov about being weightless.